

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-06

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FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7851

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 3364

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, NU

SUBJECT: JACK ANDERSON'S ARTICLES

REF: MANAGUA 3360

1. AS SUGGESTED IN REFTEL (MANAGUA'S 3360) I SPOKE TO PRESIDENT SOMOZA ON MORNING OF AUGUST 27 CONCERNING GON HANDLING OF ANDERSON ARTICLES. I TOLD HIM THAT IT WAS OUR CONSIDERED JUDGMENT THAT THE MOST PRUDENT COURSE FOR THE GON WOULD BE NOT TO MAKE A PUBLIC ISSUE OVER THE ANDERSON SERIES. OVER REACTION MAY BE COUNTER PRODUCTIVE AND GENERATE FOLLOW-ON ARTICLES BY ANDERSON, WHICH IS NOT IN THE INTEREST OF THE GON. I HAD MADE THESE VERY POINTS TO CARLOS DUBON, IN A BRIEF TALK I HAD WITH HIM IN PRESIDENT SOMOZA'S OFFICE PRIOR TO MY LUNCH ON MONDAY WITH THE PRESIDENT.

2. PRESIDENT SOMOZA REPLIED THAT HE WANTED TO AVOID POLEMICS WITH ANDERSON AND THAT'S WHY HE WAS HAVING THIRD PARTIES ANSWER THE CHARGES. HE SAID THAT ANDERSON CHARGES AFFECTED THIRD PARTIES, INCLUDING THE U.S. GOVERNMENT. IT WAS UP TO THEM TO REACT. HE STATED FLATLY THAT IF THE DEPARTMENT DID NOT DENY ANDERSON'S CLAIM THAT U.S. GOVERNMENT FUNDS HAD BEEN MISUSED IN NICARAGUA IT WOULD SERIOUSLY DAMAGE THE AID PROGRAM, AND U.S. -NICARAGUAN RELATIONS. THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT HE WOULD TAKE THE MATTER TO

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THE U.S. CONGRESS IF THAT WAS NECESSARY, TO REFUTE ANDERSON'S

ACCUSATIONS.HE SAID THAT HE HAD GOOD FRIENDS IN THE CONGRESS AND IT WOULD BE EASY TO ARRANGE A CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATION OF THE AID PROGRAM IN NICARAGUA. THE PRESIDENT DECLARED THAT HE WAS OPERATING ON THE PRINCIPLE THAT IF SOME OF ANDERSON'S CLAIMS ARE REFUTED, THE REST BECOME QUESTIONABLE.

COMMENT: PRESIDENT SOMOZA APPRECIATED OUR CONCERN OVER THE ANDERSON SERIES AND OBVIOUSLY SAW DEPARTMENT'S REACTION AS A TEST OF OUR RELATIONS.

WE COMPLETELY CONCUR WITH THE BUREAU'S RECOMMENDATION THAT A LETTER BE GIVEN TO AMBASSADOR SEVILLA SACASA STATING THAT THE USG HAS NOT RELEASED CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION TO ANDERSON, AND THAT INTENSIVE AID AUDITS HAVE REVEALED NO MISUSE OF AID FUNDS IN NICARAGUA.
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